

GREAT CITIES SPEAKER SERIES DEBUTS

International leaders in urban planning, design, architecture, art and sustainability to help provoke discussion, thought about San Jose's future

SAN JOSE, CALIF. (May 7, 2008)—San Jose's Office of Cultural Affairs, 1stACT Silicon Valley and the Commonwealth Club of California today announced the debut of the *2008 Great Cities Speakers Series*.

Beginning June 5, in conjunction with 01SJ: A Global Festival of Art on the Edge, and continuing through December, the Series will consist of monthly public lectures designed to provoke thought, discussion and imagination about the city of the future and to bring important outside perspectives to local and regional efforts on civic planning, culture, art and design. The lectures are free. Each lecture will be followed by a reception to continue conversation among audience members.

The *Great Cities Speakers Series* is also intended to engage residents as well as business and civic leaders who will be directly impacted by the evolution of the *Envision San Jose General Plan 2040*—the key planning document that will guide San Jose's growth, character, and service ambitions over the next 10-30 years.

"I applaud the debut of the *Great Cities Speakers Series*. As an international crossroads for ideas, talent, business and culture, San Jose welcomes the innovative thinking that will be sparked with these presentations," said San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed. "It is my hope that the people with the real power to shape our City—new and long-time San Jose residents, business owners, nonprofit leaders—will attend the Series and be inspired to offer input on how we go forward with the General Plan."

The inaugural *Great Cities Speakers Series* will include Stewart Brand, co-chairman and co-founder of The Long Now Foundation, William Moorish, professor of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban and environmental planning at the University of Virginia; Dan Burden, director of Walkable Communities; Historian Dr. Glenna Matthews, author of "Silicon Valley Women and the California Dream"; Dr. Ann Markusen, professor of Urban Planning and Policy Development and director of the Project on Regional and Industrial Economics at Rutgers University; Carol Coletta, president and CEO, CEOs for Cities and host, Smart City Radio; Anne Pasternak,

president and creative director, Creative Time; and Luis Valdez, internationally recognized playwright, filmmaker and educator.

“This group of distinguished leaders has addressed significant urban planning and design issues around the world. It’s my hope that their collective voices will help inspire others to consider the growth, character and urban planning efforts of San Jose and Silicon Valley,” said Bruce Chizen, chairman, 1stACT Silicon Valley, and former CEO, Adobe Systems.

1stACT (Art, Creativity and Technology) is a co-presenter of the *Great Cities Speakers Series* and is collaborating with San Jose on issues surrounding the public realm, urban aesthetics and walkable corridors to re-engineer the public spaces to be as pedestrian friendly as possible.

“As a global model fueled by innovation, creativity and opportunity, San Jose is excited to explore how the future will and can be different,” said Shirley Lewis, co-chair of the *Envision San Jose General Plan 2040* Committee. “The topics explored through the *Great Cities Speakers Series* will bring this type of thinking to the front and center as we evolve the General Plan and create a vibrant urban center for Silicon Valley.”

Funded by the Office of Cultural Affairs and 1stACT Silicon Valley, the Great Cities Series is also supported by the American Institute of Architects-Santa Clara Valley Chapter, American Institute of Certified Planners, the Commonwealth Club of California, Fairmont Hotel San Jose, the San Jose Repertory Theater and the San Jose State University Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

The *Great Cities Speakers Series* schedule is as follows (subject to change):

- **“City Planet,”** Stewart Brand, co-chairman and co-founder of The Long Now Foundation, 6-7 p.m., Thursday, June 5, San Jose City Hall Council Chambers, 200 E. Santa Clara Street
- **“When Cities Tango: The Art of *Glocal* Public Space Design,”** William Moorish, professor of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban and environmental planning at the University of Virginia, 6-7 p.m., Sunday, June 8, San Jose City Hall Council Chambers, 200 E. Santa Clara Street

- **“Great Ideas for Building Livable Communities,”** Dan Burden, director of Walkable Communities, 6-7 p.m., Monday, July 14, San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo De San Antonio
- **“The New Majority-Minority City,”** Dr. Glenna Matthews, author of “Silicon Valley Women and the California Dream,” 6-7 p.m., Monday, August 18, San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo De San Antonio
- **“The Distinctive City,”** Dr. Ann Markusen, professor of Urban Planning and Policy Development and director of the Project on Regional and Industrial Economics at Rutgers University. 6-7 p.m., Monday, September 15, San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo De San Antonio
- **“The Next Generation City,”** Carol Coletta, president and CEO, CEOs for Cities and host, Smart City Radio, 6-7 p.m., Thursday, October 9, venue TBD
- **“The Power of Zero: The Mayan Key to Vibrant Communities,”** Luis Valdez; playwright, film maker, educator; 6-7 p.m., Monday, November 3, San Jose Repertory Theater, 6-7 p.m.
- **“The Reframing of the Everyday: Artists and Public Space,”** Anne Pasternak, president and creative director, Creative Time, 6-7 p.m., Monday, December 1, San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo De San Antonio

A reception will follow each lecture 7-8 p.m.

For more information, or reservations, please visit www.commonwealthclub.org.

To receive notice of program changes or additions, please go to www.1stACT.org.

ABOUT THE SAN JOSE OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The Office of Cultural Affairs is part of the City's Office of Economic Development. Together, they foster cultural and economic development as related strategies for building San Jose as the creative center of Silicon Valley. The Office of Cultural Affairs coordinates services for outdoor events and festivals, offers financial support for arts and culture providers, supports arts education, and leads the development of public art works throughout the city.

ABOUT THE CITY OF SAN JOSE

From its founding in 1777 as California's first city, San Jose has been a leader, driven by its spirit of innovation. Today, San Jose stands as the largest city in Northern California and the Capital of Silicon Valley—the world's leading center of innovation. The city, the 10th largest in the U.S., is committed to remaining a top-ranked place to do business, work, live, play and learn. For more information, visit, www.sanjoseca.gov.

ABOUT 1STACT SILICON VALLEY

1stACT Silicon Valley is a broad network of regional civic, cultural, and business leaders working to catalyze participation and investment at the intersection of art, creativity, and technology. 1stACT strives to create an authentic sense of place in Silicon Valley that fuels community pride, broad participation, and philanthropic investment. Please visit, www.1stact.org

ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

The Commonwealth Club of California is the nation's oldest and largest public affairs forum, bringing together its more than 18,000 members for over 400 annual events on topics ranging across politics, culture, society and the economy. The Club has offices in San Francisco and San Jose, with regular events in both cities, as well as programs in the East and North Bay. Please visit, www.commonwealthclub.org.

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